

Commencement Team Meeting

June 16, 2009

JCK 1100

Attendees:

Micky Autrey, Amy Beck, Jenna Gonzales, Jennifer Jahns, Glenda Jurek-Rahe, Lanita Legan, Kim May, Veronica Mazuca, Brad McAllister, Kristin McDaniel, Ashley Ransom, Tina Schultz, Rebecca Swindal, Michael Whitehawk, Chris Williams, Lauren Williams

Departments/Colleges with Representatives in this Meeting:

Curriculum Services, Recycling Services, College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts and Communication, Information Technology, University College, Disability Services, Auxiliary Services, College of Applied Arts, the Graduate College, the University Bookstore

The group discussed and adopted the January Meeting Minutes.

Commencement Website

Comments:

- A Faculty Information page and Volunteer page have been added to the Commencement Website.
- The Graduation Application deadline, diploma pick up schedule, and other important dates have been highlighted on the homepage during peak times.

Action Items:

- Kristin will add a volunteer link to the homepage.

Safety Workshop

Comments:

- A safety workshop, hosted by UPD and Risk Management, was held three times during the spring semester. Attendees learned CPR, use of AED devices, and safety procedures for the commencement ceremonies.
- This workshop will be offered annually (Spring semester).

Recycling

Comments:

- The paper bins set out in the concourse by Recycling Services were successful in May. We were able to recycle many programs and cardboard boxes.
- The set up of bins for cans and bottles has not been successful and will most likely be suspended. Most bins had less than 10 items.

Suggestions:

- Continue the can and plastic bins at the entrances and high traffic areas.
- Proceed with “gently used” program recycling between ceremonies.
- Jenna mentioned making bins that are specific to commencement (Ex. “Dispose of Programs Here”)
- Brad mentioned that many programs are left on the busses and must be thrown away. In the future, the bus supervisors will provide a labeled recycling box for each bus which will be emptied into the paper bins located in the concourse.
- A statement should be included inside the front cover of the program that encourages people to recycle the program.

Action Items:

- Set a meeting with Jenna to discuss new recycling plan and the possibility of new bins.
- Provost will consider a recycling statement for the commencement program.
- Brad will request boxes from Ikon to use in the buses for the recycling of programs.

Parking and Traffic

Comments:

- Brad mentioned that many guests parked in the Springtown Mall parking lot and HEB when campus lots were full. Busses serviced these areas. When Strahan was closed for crowd assessment, they were given orders by UPD dispatchers to not bring guests from the parking lots to the coliseum. Approximately 100 guests were left near Springtown Mall and approximately 100 more were left in the back Stadium parking lot.
- Guests that wished to reach Strahan Coliseum walked from Springtown Mall and the Stadium Lots, crossing through the Baseball/Softball Complex and Charles Austin Drive.
- Brad mentioned that approximately 250 guests were not able to enter the coliseum on Saturday due to the overcapacity of Strahan.
- Auxiliary Services staff directed traffic to other parking areas including JCK. There were no police or parking guards present.
- The online Parking Map has been updated to include the JCK lots and adjacent dorm parking.

Suggestions:

- Brad suggested having parking lot attendants flagging vehicles into each parking place. Cars should be directed into one lot at a time only. When it fills, the second lot should be opened and then the third.
- A new route that includes Bobcat Village as a designated Park and Ride and excludes the back stadium lot would be much more efficient for the busses. The current route brings the busses through congested areas and can take as long as 15 minutes per cycle.

Action Items:

- Kristin will set a meeting with UPD and Auxiliary Services to discuss May commencement and future ceremonies.

Overflow

Comments:

- An overflow area was made available in the Maroon and Gold Room for Friday 6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m. On Friday, the room was mostly unused. On Saturday, the room filled to capacity.
- The concourse, which has a capacity of 1,500 people, was not opened on Saturday. Due to the volatility of the crowd, UPD determined that it would not be safe to open the concourse for standing room only once the seating areas were full.
- Micky mentioned that we had low attendance. In Liberal Arts, 200 undergraduate candidates did not attend the ceremony. It is possible that they were deterred by the H1N1 virus warning and the expected crowd.
- Veronica mentioned that the acoustics and lighting of the Coliseum affected the quality of the overflow video.

Signs

Comments:

- Lanita mentioned that the laminated reserved signs in the disabled seating section were successful. She requested signs in the other sections (entrances 2, 3, 9 and 10) as well as in Section N where there is one row that can be accessed by those who cannot climb stairs.

Suggestions:

- Lower the yellow vinyl gym directional signs in concourse to be closer to eye level.
- Use white sandwich board signs for candidate directions in Gym 101. Floor signs are more noticeable.

Action Items:

- Kristin will print and laminate extra reserved signs.
- Kristin will add to student duties to lower vinyl signs.
- Kristin will reserve one row in Section N.
- Kristin will look into borrowing white sandwich board signs for August.

Team Mission Statement

Suggestions:

- Update the current mission statement to replace "excellent results".

Proposed Team Mission Statement

To engage the University community in the planning, implementation, and continuous improvement of our commencement ceremonies with a goal of...

...achieving excellence in candidate recognition.

...providing a positive experience for our candidates and their guests.

Action Items:

- Kristin will send an email to the team for their vote.

Multiple Processional Lines

Comments:

- The group was informed that we will be using multiple processional lines beginning in August.
- There will be four lines of candidates using three entrances, 5, 6, and 7.
- The Platform Party and Faculty will continue to enter through entrance 6.
- All entrances have handrails.
- Advisors will need to be available to lead students to their prospective entrance.

Action Items:

- A sub-group meeting will be held prior to August commencement to discuss the new procedures.

General Topics

Comments and Suggestions:

- Micky mentioned that Academic Affairs will be more involved in volunteering.
- Lanita asked that we close entrance 11 and do not place programs there. Ushers have reported that this area is relatively unused.
- The group recommended that advisors and other staff use TRACS to send messages to their students. Announcements are displayed for a long time and can be more helpful than an email, which can be deleted or overlooked.
- Provide orange cones in each gym to use to mark candidate lines.
- ODS and Ushers are available to assist disabled students on the floor of the coliseum.
- Rent an inflatable screen to project the ceremonies.
- There needs to be a consistency of compensation time earned by all commencement workers/volunteers.
- Kim mentioned that Dan was editing reader cards for students in the gyms. Ex. Adding middle names, military titles, etc. Micky acknowledged that this is acceptable.

Action Items:

- Kristin will purchase or borrow 5 cones for each gym for a total of 10.

Commencement Program

The commencement program will be downloaded on the Late Add Deadline. For Summer this date is July 20th. Given the late date of this edit, new procedures for the commencement program have been discussed and are as follows.

- The commencement program will be sent out to Advisors and The Graduate College in PDF on July 21st.
- Since student names must match what is in the system, there should be no edits required.
- No student names can be added, changed, or deleted after July 20th.
- For this first run, the program should be evaluated and feedback sent to Kristin by July 27th.
- In the future, it may not be necessary to have a program edit. (other than Dissertation, Masters Thesis and Honors Thesis titles)
- Doctoral student information pages, Masters Thesis titles and Honors Thesis titles should be prepared in advance and submitted by July 27th.

Comments and Suggestions:

- In May, 8 programs were ordered per candidate down from 10 in previous semesters. There were programs leftover.
- In August, we will order 7 programs per candidate.
- Students often just want to see their name in the program, but do not keep a copy. It is helpful to have a few programs on each gym table.

Action Items:

- Kristin will email all advisors and ask for comments regarding the new process.
- Kristin will send a program edit for Honors Thesis and for Dissertation and Thesis information.
- Kristin will send a calendar for the August Commencement Program review process.
- Kristin will add to the student's duties to provide two programs to each college table in the gyms.

Graduation Application Deadline

Comments and Suggestions:

- In the June CAD meeting, the Deans discussed the existing Graduation Application deadline.
- Students are allowed to apply as "Participants" prior to the Late Add Deadline. The late deadline for summer is July 20th.